

develop except in a partial degree, their resources. It would be manifestly unwise in this company, or, as it may be presumed, in any authority whatever, to venture upon a large expenditure to acquire the capacity to accommodate a particular branch of trade, without at least some reasonable assurance that after the capacity should be acquired, sufficient trade would exist to employ it: and this consideration is particularly applicable to the operations of the rail road, inasmuch as the greater part of the preparations necessary for the transportation of coal would not be needed, and could not be advantageously employed in any other business.

This board, moreover, after thorough investigation of the subject in all its bearings, have placed no great confidence in the expectations founded upon the rapid and extensive development of the coal of that portion of the State. If the requisite capital for the purpose can be commanded, they have been unable to discover any evidence, that the demand for consumption will be such as to authorize, on their part at least, any great preparations for engaging in the trade. They have become convinced, on the contrary, that many years must elapse before the demand will require more than 100,000 tons in any one year, whatever facilities of transportation may be afforded. It is to be observed also, that to justify the Rail Road company in engaging extensively in the transportation of coal, at such rates as would bring it to market upon equal terms with coal of other States, it would be necessary that the trade should be large in amount, and of certain and regular supply throughout the year; of which, up to this time certainly there has been no satisfactory assurance. Of the capacity of the company, with those advantages, to engage in the transportation of coal, at rates extremely profitable, and at the same time so low as to exclude the apprehension of rivalry from other works; according to any rate of charge at present known—the board have never doubted. The estimates accompanying this answer, and the large margin of profit which they exhibit upon the terms assumed, will shew that, if the board would be content with a nett profit of six per cent. upon the capital employed, it has the capacity to engage in the trade from the mines to the city of Baltimore, at rates below any other mode of transportation at present known. The indisposition of the board therefore, heretofore to engage in the transportation of coal has proceeded from no other apprehension than the want of certainty and regularity in the amount; and on this ground they have preferred waiting events, and to test the practicability of developments so confidently predicted by others; with entire confidence, at the same time, that if those expectations should be realized, and the trade in coal become sufficiently regular and certain, they could at any time engage in the transportation of it to Baltimore without danger of serious competition with any other rival.

Previous to the order of the House of Delegates, of the 25th January, however, the board were officially informed by the President of the Maryland and New York Iron and Coal company, that he had procured the requisite funds for the construction of a